1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

757 to apply to the traders for medicines for fever. All go to Mr. Lyon in case of snake-bite, and when taken in time, he says he has never failed to cure a case with either ammonia or iodine, as seemed to be indicated. It may be interesting to note that after obtaining no relief with one of these medicines, he has given the other, and with immediate good results. He gives the iodine in the form of alcoholic tincture in 10 to 15-drop doses, every 10 to 15 minutes. Some of them seem to believe in the incantations of the *Anus* or doctors, but foreign medicines are gradually gaining ground over sorcery. For rheumatic pains, headaches, &c., there are two remedies used. The simplest is counter-irritation by whipping with nettle leaves. The other is bleeding. The lancet is made usually from the tongue of a jew's-harp, broken off at the angle and sharpened to a point. This is set at right angles in a little stick for a handle, and is used by holding it over the affected part and striking it briskly with a finger. They never regularly open a vein and draw off a quantity of blood, but every stroke makes a separate puncture, from which only a few drops exude. At Borubeta I saw a man bled to relieve the aching of fatigue in his arms. He had been scraping *agave* leaves, to extract the fibre for hammocks. He had at least fifty punctures made over his two arms.

222 439 314 The natural products of the country are principally sarsaparilla root and india rubber. The sarsaparilla vine is green, angular, and covered with thorns. It grows very long and climbs over bushes and even trees in the more open parts of the forest. At short distances it is jointed, and if it touches the ground every joint sends out a new set of roots. The leaves are large and acuminately oval and have three longitudinal ribs, the mid-rib and two parallel ones, half way between the middle and the edge. The fruit is round and grows in a cluster something like grapes. The vine has a tap-root, and besides sends out a large number of horizontal roots near the surface of the ground, and from six to ten feet long. The sarsaparilla hunter first clears away carefully all the bushes and undergrowth with his machete. He then, with a hooked stick, digs into the ground at the base of the vine until he loosens the earth and finds where the best roots are. The tap-root is never disturbed, and it is customary to dig up only half the roots at a time, to avoid killing the vine. Having selected those that look most promising, he places his hand under one or two and gently lifting them, follows their course with his hooked stick, loosening the soil and lifting them out, following them to their ends. They are then cut off, the dirt carefully replaced around the vine, and the roots laid in the sun, or hung up to dry. A vine yields generally from four to nine pounds of green roots. When dry they are tied into cylindrical rolls a foot long and four or five inches thick, weighing about a pound.

India rubber is obtained by scoring the bark of the trees obliquely. Several cuts are placed one above another and in pairs converging downwards; the sap being directed in its flow by a leaf placed at the bottom, which serves as a spout, to direct it into the vessel placed to receive it.

1:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
SA19 Talamanca SA19

When collected it looks like milk. It is caused to coagulate and turn black by the juice of a species of convolvulus. It is generally made into cakes a little over a foot long, about eight inches wide and an inch thick. 222 314 439

It is with these two articles, and an occasional deer skin, that all the purchases are made from the traders. They buy various kinds of cotton cloth for clothing, colored handkerchiefs, needles, thread, machetes, axes, knives, iron kettles and pots, a few medicines, and powder, shot, and caps. Their intertribal trade is still more limited. The Bri-bris sell net-bags and hammocks to the Tiribis, and formerly made the large cotton blankets, already described, for sale in Terraba. They buy in Terraba cows and dogs, murex-shell whistles, murex-dyed cotton, and beads made by rubbing down a small species of shell of the genus *Conus*. Sometimes both the Bri-bris and Cabecars, but especially the latter, carry sarsaparilla or rubber a hard ten-days' journey to Matina, to exchange it for cocoa, of which they might have enough and to spare for the mere trouble of planting it. But Indians are, almost without exception, a lazy, miserable, and unimprovable race. 439 438

It is perhaps advisable to state that the whole of the present memoir was written in Costa Rica, and it was not until my return to Philadelphia, that I encountered the elaborate compilation of Bancroft, on "the Native Races of the Pacific States." At the date of the present writing, but three volumes of the promised five have made their appearance. While I regret that the information in that work, on the present field is so meagre, and in some respects so different from my own observations, I have said nothing which I wish either to retract or modify. I state nothing but what I have seen and learned while living among the people whom I describe. At the same time I trust that I may not be accused of a spirit of antagonism, in pointing out some of the more serious errors in the work in question, and which, if not corrected, might seriously mislead future students. 114

Vol I. Chapter VII. p. 684, *et seq.* is devoted to "the wild tribes of Central America," and the Indians living below Lake Nicaragua, and the San Juan River are here designated as Isthmians; an appropriate name, since the family seems to cover all of Costa Rica and most, if not all of the State of Panama. But the map, facing p. 684 is utterly incorrect in so far, at least, as it professes to give the distribution of the Indians of Costa Rica.

The region of Talamanca described by me, as containing the three tribes of Cabecars, Bri-bris, and Tiribis, and known to the Spaniards under the generic term of Blancos, is here given up to the Valientes, who should be placed to the south and south-east of the Chiriqui lagoon; and the Ramas, who live in Nicaragua, back of the Mosquito coast. The central plateau, in which are situated the cities and towns of Atenas, San Ramon, Alajuela, Heredia, San José, Cartago, &c., in short, that occupied by practically the entire Hispano-American population of Costa Rica, is here given to the Blancos, and on the shores of the Gulf of

415 ing liquids, in the kitchen, and for carrying water to the fields or on trips. Interestingly enough, a ring base to sustain the gourd erect does not seem to be known, the vessel being placed on the ground and balanced by rocks or the legs of the *fogón*. In addition to the
[231] uses mentioned above, gourds are used as bee hives (see fig. 4, *d*), as a receptacle for the
[283] spindle whorl while making thread (see fig. 5, *c*), for carrying seed when planting, and are employed extensively as sieves. The use of the gourd as a sieve is very common amongst the present close neighbors of the *Boruca*, the *Talamanca* peoples.[31] For use as
412 a sieve, the gourd is covered with holes made
415 by a combination cutter and puncturer. This tool has a handle of pejibaye palm in one end of which a forked piece of metal with one prong longer than the other is inserted and bound by string. The longest prong is shoved into the gourd until the shortest penetrates the outer surface deeply enough to cut a line in a circle. This operation has the double
[531] effect of making a circular hole and at the same time a line design around the aperture
[534] (see figs. 7, *b–8*; 7, *c–3*). Gourds are also made into *maracas* or rattles to accompany the drum at celebrations (see p. 29). There is
531 no rule about the decoration of the gourds. They are either left untouched, or are carved in various designs, the most popular of which is the leaf motif, although animal figures sometimes appear. The patterns are cut with a knife, and left to turn a darker color with time.

381 **Glues.** Glues are rarely used by the *Boruca*.
● 314 A glue that is used for mending vessels, or, at times for water-proofing the dug-out canoes is made from a small palm (*Elaeis melanococca Gaertn.*) called in Boruca *tuskra'*, *tus*, meaning "short," and *kra'*, meaning "plant." This palm has thorny leaves and red fruit (see p. 15). To make the glue, the trunk is cut in pieces and spread out in the open so that the dew has easy access to the sap. The following morning, the residue, which is the glue, is gathered.

323 **Pottery.** Very little pottery is now being
177 made by the *Boruca*. The European war, however, has caused iron cooking vessels to become practically unobtainable as well as prohibitive in price, and the Indians are slowly

[31] Skinner, 1920, pp. 66–67.

323 [177] reverting to make their clay cooking pots as before. There are several common pottery shapes. One kind is a large vessel with a pointed base which is slightly rounded, and a projection near the base, the neck indented, and a projecting rim. This type is called *kwarɛ'* in Boruca, and resembles the Spanish *tinaja*. Other forms consist of smaller vessels with rounded base and a flat protruding rim, at times with a projecting nubbin, as if an attempt to portray a head, tail, and wings, such as is encountered on the pots found in ancient graves; and sometimes the *comal* or indented clay dish which is used for frying. Plain rounded vessels, often with a thumb-nail design on the border or rim, are common for cooking.

[462] Women are the potters. The usual way of making a vessel is to mash the clay, if soft, with the hands, and if hard, with a stick, until it is fine. Then a coil is made of this clay, and the coil doubled over to give more strength to the whole. The base is started with these coils in the manner of a large tortilla, or corn cake. A rounded wooden mold is used only for the base. The clay tortilla is put in the mold and shaped to the sides. Then coils of clay are added, and the vessel grows above the mold. Smoothing and evening are done with the hands. Once completed, the pot is left from fifteen days to one month within the house to dry. The excess clay is then removed with a knife, and the vessel is polished by rubbing it all over with a seed which comes from a vine called in Spanish *ojo de buey* (*Mucuna urens* [L.] DC.). A bed of firewood is made outside the house, and the vessel is placed in the center. Firewood is stacked around the pot until it is covered. Fire is set, and the wood burns away leaving the vessel intact. When a particularly strong pot is desired, a *masa* is added. This *masa* is ground corn mixed with water to form a paste. It is put both inside and outside of the vessel at the moment it is removed from the fire, and while it is still red from the heat. After the pot is cold, the *masa* is removed.

383 314 **Rubber.** The use of rubber does not seem to be very ancient with the *Boruca*. The gum from the wild rubber tree which abounds in the vicinity (*Castilla fallax* O. F. Cook) is

[p. 19-B]
occasionally used on the dug-out canoes.

[P. 14(B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19 Bribri Cabecar

322 selected is placed over the fire to soften. A wire is heated and is pushed through the length of the wood to remove the soft pulp. If wire is not available, a *pejibaye* rod is substituted. The inside is smoothed by wrapping *chumico* [824] leaves (*Curatella americana* L.) around a *pejibaye* rod and rubbing it up and down. The gun is then filled with ashes and the outside [237] covered with beeswax and carbon to preserve it. Two shells, beads, beetles, or lumps 411 of wax are often used as sights (fig. 12, *d*). The balls for ammunition are made of clay which has been dried, ground fine, and then mixed with water, worked with the fingers and rounded with a wild turkey bone as [415] needed. They are carried in string bags.

Lances made of *pejibaye* wood with metal heads are occasionally seen. When rifles or [415] shotguns are available, rubber bags are used to carry a powder horn, wick, etc.

[223] Bolas are made by small boys for hunting birds. *Guarumo* fiber is used instead of cord [857] and river stones are used for ammunition. A loop of *pita* (agave thread) is made in one end into which the forefinger is placed. Then both ends of the bola are grasped in the hands and it is swung over the head.

223 A resin called *yok* in Cabécar is put on a tree where birds are apt to feed. Their feet [314] stick in this, prohibiting escape. Wild boars 224 and large game are often trapped. This is accomplished by tying a rope to a tree beside a path and making a slipknot at the other end, leaving a wide loop. The loop is placed in the center of the path and the animal is snared in it.

At night, in Talamanca, another type of lure is used. Crab claws, with bits of meat left in them, are tied to a piece of string about 22 yards long. Bananas, or whatever fruit the animal being hunted uses for food, is attached to one end of this string. The string is tied to a stick which is thrust into the ground to hold the bait in place. The hunters use a leaf to shield their light and remain hidden. They are alerted by the sound of the claws rattling and shoot their prey with a bow and arrow or a [262] gun. There is a superstition connected with

[192] "blow gun stick"; in Bribri *shamokaL* signifying the same as in Cabécar.

[See category 116 - END PLATE 11 - ANALYST.]

[P.24(B)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Bribri
Cabecar

381 **Glues.** *See* Musical Instruments and Hunting.

281 **Skins.** There is relatively little use of cattle hide among these people. The Cabécares of the [231] Pacific slope who have most of the cattle, and rarely the Bribri and Cabécares of Talamanca, [415] make pouches or hunting bags from the sacs of bulls. The Pacific Cabécares also copy their non-indigenous neighbors in using skins to dry rice, beans, and cacao. Both wild pig and jaguar hide are made into pouches. Pieces of [824] deer hide are used for minute bags which [777] contain good luck seeds to put on children's necklaces. In upper Talamanca men (chiefly [292] medicine men) wear deer and jaguar skins over their clothing on festive occasions. Peccary [534] hide is used to cover drums on the Pacific slope and iguana skin is used on the Caribbean side.

● 314 **Rubber.** On the Caribbean slope, rubber is 824 tapped from the wild tree (*Castilla fallax* O. F. Cook) by the Cabécares and made into pouches (*see* Hunting).

322 **Wood and Stone.** Wood, of course, has a variety of uses many of which have been mentioned earlier. Among the Bribri of the [252] Caribbean littoral, grinding tables are often made of wood and are large enough for several women to use at the same time. They are located beside a water hole or stream and are balanced on logs. On the Caribbean side, [415] mahogany or cedar mixing trays or troughs, [273] up to twelve feet in length and supported by four feet, are used for chicha mash (*see* Furnishings). Vertical wooden mortars for rice, [412] shallow mortars, and large trays or bowls are [415] common. These last two items are used for [251] drying foodstuffs or even for mixing paste [252] with water. Wooden staffs known as *cacique* sticks are an important part of the medicine man's equipment (*see* Special Paraphernalia and Significance).

372 In upper Talamanca, the fire stick is used (*see* Fire-making).

324 Stone is not worked today but is employed 284 for food preparation and the manufacture of bark cloth.